

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the present application.

Listing of Claims:

Claims 1 through 32 (canceled)

Claim 33 (currently amended): ~~A ceramic composite manufacturing method as set forth in claim 10, characterized in that the~~ A method of manufacturing a ceramic composite, the composite characterized in comprising a phase having as its principal component, at a content of 40 to 98 wt.%, a pure carbon allotrope of 30 nm or less average phase size, said carbon being one selected from graphite, amorphous carbon, carbon black, and fullerenes, and the composite characterized in comprising a ceramic phase having an average grain size of 30 nm or less and constituted by a ceramic matrix that excludes pure carbon allotropes; the method characterized in that a powder blend, having an average particle size of 30 nm or less, of a ceramic powder and of a carbon powder is molded, and the obtained molded form is sintered within a non-oxidizing atmosphere at a sintering temperature of 800 to 1500°C and a sintering pressure [[is]] of 1000 MPa or more.

Claim 34 (currently amended): ~~A method of manufacturing the ceramic composite as set forth in claim 28,~~ A method of manufacturing a ceramic composite, the ceramic composite characterized in comprising a phase having as its principal component, at a content of 40 to 98 wt.%, a pure carbon allotrope of 30 nm or less average phase size, said carbon being one selected from graphite, amorphous carbon, carbon black, and fullerenes, and the composite characterized in comprising

a ceramic phase having an average grain size of 30 nm or less and constituted from at least one selected from the group made up of nitrides, carbides, composite nitrides, composite carbides, and carbonitrides of Si, Hf, V, Nb, Ta, Cr, Mo and W, the ceramic phase therein constituted by a ceramic matrix that excludes pure carbon allotropes; the method characterized in that a powder blend of a ceramic powder constituting said ceramic phase is molded together with a carbon powder, and the obtained molded form is sintered within a non-oxidizing atmosphere at a sintering temperature of 800 to 1500°C and a sintering pressure of 1000 MPa or more.

Claims 35 through 37 (canceled)

Claim 38 (currently amended): A ceramic composite ~~as set forth in claim 37,~~ characterized in ~~that the~~ comprising:

a phase having as its principal component, at a content of 40 to 98 wt.%, a pure carbon allotrope consisting[[s]] of graphite of 30 nm or less average phase size;
and

a ceramic phase having an average grain size of 30 nm or less and consisting of silicon carbide, the ceramic phase therein constituted by a ceramic matrix that excludes pure carbon allotropes.

Claims 39 and 40 (canceled)

Claim 41 (currently amended): A ceramic composite ~~as set forth in claim 40,~~ characterized in ~~that the~~ comprising:

a phase having as its principal component, at a content of 40 to 98 wt.%, a pure carbon allotrope consisting[[s]] of graphite of 30 nm or less average phase size;
and

a ceramic phase having an average grain size of 30 nm or less and consisting of silicon nitride, the ceramic phase therein constituted by a ceramic matrix that excludes pure carbon allotropes.

Claim 42 (canceled)